



PLACES AND SPACES

November 30, 1991

Jane Mallett Theatre
St. Lawrence Centre
for the Arts
Toronto



THE ESPRIT ORCHESTRA
Alex Pauk
Music Director and Conductor

PLACES AND SPACES
November 30, 1991
Jane Mallett Theatre

PROGRAMME PLACES AND SPACES

Voicing ** Simon Bainbridge (Britain)

Nocturne Colin McPhee (Canada)

Three Places In New England Charles Ives (U.S.A.)

- I. The 'St. Gaudens' in Boston Common
(Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and his Colored Regiment)
- II. Putnam's Camp, Redding, Connecticut
- III. The Housatonic at Stockbridge

INTERMISSION

Dominion * Barry Truax (Canada)

* World Premiere commissioned by The Esprit Orchestra

Tonight's performance is being recorded by the CBC for broadcast on
Two New Hours, 94.1 on the FM dial.

INVITATION

The Board of Directors of The Esprit Orchestra invites you to stay for complimentary coffee
in the theatre lobby after the performance:

- * meet Barry Truax - composer of *Dominion* *
- * chat with Conductor Alex Pauk *



VOICING - Programme Note

Voicing, for chamber orchestra, was commissioned by the London-based Nash Ensemble, and first performed in 1982. The music, with its pulsing chords and rhythms and repetitive structure, grew out of Bainbridge's awareness of the music of Steve Reich and of other composers of the American minimalist school. Yet, it is not merely a piece that imitates American minimalism. Bainbridge assimilated these minimalist aspects while maintaining the function of inner contrasts drawn from a strong tradition of dualism in European music (for example, the simple contrast between the use of major and minor keys). The synthesis of the two results in music of minimal material but with a full expression of that material. To further enhance the work, Bainbridge also incorporates his understanding of the differences between America, the New World with its burgeoning musical style, and Europe, with its classical and romantic roots.

SIMON BAINBRIDGE

Simon Bainbridge has established a strongly individual voice within a post-war generation already remarkable for the substance and variety of its musical achievement. While new facets of Bainbridge's own musical personality are revealed as his style continues to evolve, a richly imaginative approach to the dimensions of instrumental timbre and textures remains characteristic of his work.. One of the least doctrinaire of composers, the freshness of his music reflects an openness of approach together with a resourceful ear.

Simon Bainbridge was born in London in 1952 and was a composition pupil of John Lambert at the Royal College of Music, subsequently studying with Gunther Schuller at Tanglewood in 1973 and 1974. From 1976 to 1978 he was Forman Fellow in Composition at Edinburgh University. In 1978 returning to the USA on US/UK Bicentennial Fellowship, Bainbridge was Composer-in-Residence to Southern Arts, 1983-85, and in 1987 he was awarded the prestigious Gemini Fellowship.

The period spent in New York during 1978 was important, as it prepared the way for a new stylistic development. Bainbridge's encounter with the minimalist procedures of Steve Reich stimulated an interest in process techniques to generate musical structures, but the material with which he worked was very much his own, as the instrumental piece *Voicing* effectively demonstrates.

Two of Bainbridge's more recent works, *Metamorphosis* and the string *Sextet* suggest the beginnings of a new direction. In both, he is concerned with individually profiled instrumental lines which emerge from and recede into a background harmonic field.



NOCTURNE - Programme Note

Nocturne, a small and delicate work of great subtlety, shows that McPhee did indeed find a style of his own. This work, exemplifying McPhee's mature writing, makes subtle use of Balinese musical material and composed motifs, melodies, and rhythms. It appears as a transfer of the chime-like gamelan keyed instruments and gongs into a Western orchestral setting with various flute and woodwind melodies borrowed from Balinese music.

Nocturne was commissioned by the Contemporary Music Society - an American organization - and first performed in New York in 1958 under Leopold Stokowski in a concert of Western music with Asiatic connections. Carol Oja, in a recent critical biography of McPhee's life and music (Colin McPhee: Composer in Two Worlds, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1990), describes *Nocturne* as "a luxuriant piece, with the shimmering energy of the gamelan transformed into a profound personal statement." Indeed, the exotic rhythms and melodies call to mind the fascinating nature of Asia, though the clear and effective orchestration is lodged in the continuing traditions of Western music. This juxtaposition of two different musical geographies marks McPhee as not only a composer, but in the words of Oja, as "among those open-minded explorers who have attempted to distill a new essence from such global interconnections."

COLIN MCPHEE

Colin McPhee was born in Montreal in 1901. Following initial musical studies in his home city, McPhee went to the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, where he graduated in 1921. He continued his studies, chiefly in piano and advanced composition, in Toronto and Paris, and in 1926, McPhee settled in New York. Among his first successes were his *Concerto for Piano and Wind Octet*, a *Sea Chanty* Suite for male chorus, two pianos and drums, and some experimental film work.

In 1931, McPhee heard, for the first time, recordings of percussion orchestras from Java and Bali. He was so fascinated with the subtle interplay of rhythm and sonorities of the gongs, gong-chimes, metallophones, drums and cymbals, that McPhee set out on a journey to Bali to explore the music further; eventually, McPhee built a house on the beautiful island, and remained there until war threatened in 1939. After his permanent return to America, he continued his creative work - composing, lecturing and writing - often under fellowships from the Guggenheim and Bollingen Foundations.

Prior to his death in 1964, McPhee had been lecturing at the University of California at Los Angeles. As a result of his restless life, he is classified as an American composer by some, and as a Canadian creator by others.



THREE PLACES IN NEW ENGLAND - Programme Note

Three Places In New England, also known as *A New England Symphony*, was first performed by Nicolas Slonimsky's Boston Chamber Orchestra in 1930, and in 1931 the same group performed it in New York in the presence of the composer - one of the few times Ives ever attended a performance of his own music. The three movements of the piece each convey a geographical and/or temporal impression of an aspect of Ives' native New England.

The first movement, entitled "The St. Gaudens" in Boston Common (Col. Robert Shaw and his Colored Regiment)", was inspired by a monument by the sculptor Augustus St. Gaudens, that was dedicated to the 54th Regiment of the Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in the American Civil War, which was featured recently in the motion picture *Glory*. Ives often referred to this movement as a "Black March" in tribute to the men of the 54th. Indeed, it is a ghostly impression of a march amidst allusions to various Civil War melodies.

The second movement, "Putnam's Camp, Redding, Connecticut", is typically Ivesian in its multiphonic nature, with a satirical rendering of a "country band march" played simultaneously with the "national airs" of the American Revolution. Yet it also deftly integrates impressions of the celebratory present with those of the historical past, as the single geographical setting of this movement is expressed both as General Israel Putnam's winter camp of 1778-79 and as the site of a Fourth of July picnic at which the "country band" is playing.

The third movement "from 'The Housatonic at Stockbridge'" is undoubtedly the most evocative. It combines impressions of Robert Johnson's poem ("Contented River...In Thy Dreamy Realm...") with Ives' own impressions derived from a walk he took with his wife by the Housatonic. "We walked in the meadows along the river, and heard the distant singing from the church across the river. The mist had not entirely left the river bed, and the colours, the running water, the banks and elm trees were something that one would always remember." A simple hymn tune is heard as if from some great distance across a space of ebbing and flowing orchestration. In a letter to the aforementioned Slonimsky, Ives wrote that "the subject matter...justifies (the piece's) existence."

CHARLES IVES

Charles Ives was born in October of 1874 in the small industrial city of Danbury Connecticut. He pursued one of the most extraordinary and paradoxical careers in the history of American music. For many years he lead a double life, businessman by day and private composer by night. In public he appeared as a good-humoured, somewhat retiring, and well-liked family man; in his composition and prose writings about music, however, he presented a very different image - that of a lone visionary, inspired by transcendentalist philosophy, who sought to



express "substance" in music by the most innovative and radical technical means imaginable. It now seems, more than a generation after his death, that these two sides were, in fact, carefully considered and controlled aspects of the same man.





DOMINION - Programme Note

The work may be called a meditation on the Canadian nation in that it involves the listener in an east-to-west journey across the country. In each region it is 12 noon, starting with the noon gun in St. John's harbour, Newfoundland, followed by various foghorns and other whistles. In the middle section, the noon chimes and hour bell of the Peace Tower in Ottawa are played out in counterpoint against the bells of the Basilica in Quebec City. The ubiquitous E-flat minor triad of the CPR train horn connects the various sections. In the Prairies we hear the noon siren from a small town in Alberta, along with various typical ambient sounds. Another set of horns and whistles announces the arrival in British Columbia, and the work ends at noon in Vancouver with the daily sounding of the O Canada Horn.

The source materials for the tape are recordings of Canadian soundmarks made in each province by the World Soundscape Project at Simon Fraser University during a cross-country tour in 1974. All sounds are heard at their original pitch but are stretched in time to a hundred or more times their original duration. The extended versions allow the listener to hear out the inner harmonics inside these dramatic and unique sound signals, and it is these pitches which are picked up by the live performers and amplified. The suspension of the sounds may also give listeners the space in which to explore their own inner associations with this aspect of the Canadian cultural heritage.

The title refers to Canada's official title as a nation, a designation suggested by Sir Leonard Tilley, one of the Fathers of Confederation, based on Psalm 72: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from river unto the ends of the earth."

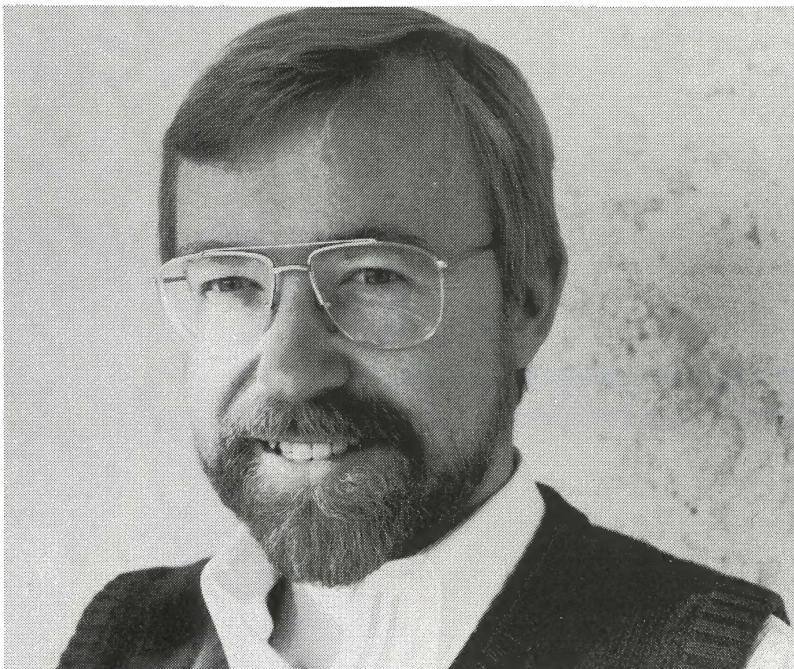
The work was commissioned by The Esprit Orchestra.

Technical Note:

The work was realized using the composer's PODX system which incorporates the DMX-1000 Digital Signal Processor controlled by a PDP Micro-11 computer. The principal signal processing technique involves time stretching of the sampled environmental sound with software for real-time granular synthesis developed by the composer in the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University. Sound densities around 250 events/second were recorded on 8-track tape and mixed down in the Sonic Research Studio at SFU.

BARRY TRUAX

Barry Truax is an Associate Professor in both the Department of Communication and the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University, where he teaches courses in acoustic communication and electroacoustic music. He has worked with the World Soundscape Project, editing its *Handbook for Acoustic Ecology*, and has published a book, *Acoustic Communication*, dealing with all aspects of sound and technology. As a composer, Truax is best known for his solo work with the PODX computer music system, which he has used for tape solo works and those which combine tape with live performers or computer graphics. A selection of these pieces may be heard on the recording *Sequence of Earlier Heaven*, and the compact discs *Digital Soundscapes*, and his latest release *Pacific Rim*, all on the Cambridge Street Records label. In 1991, his work *Pacific Dragon* was awarded the Magisterium at the International Competition of Electroacoustic Music in Bourges, France, a category open only to electroacoustic composers of 20 or more years experience.



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ALEX PAUK - Music Director and Conductor



Photo - Linda Corbett

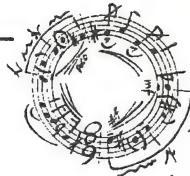
Alex Pauk has been a leading proponent of new music in Canada since 1971. After graduating from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Music in 1970, he participated in the Ontario Arts Council's Conductors' Workshop for two years, and did further work at the Toho Gakuen School of Music in Tokyo.

Both as a composer and a conductor, Mr. Pauk has been deeply involved with creating new music. As a founding member of such groups as *Arraymusic* and *Days Months and Years to Come*, he developed the skills and philosophy which lead to his founding The Esprit Orchestra as a primary force in the presentation of new Canadian music for orchestra.

Mr. Pauk's own orchestral compositions are widely performed. His works include concert music, film scores, radiophonic montages and music theatre pieces. Through his world-wide travels he not only brings diverse influences to his own creations, but is also able to search out music by foreign composers to present to Canadian audiences. At present, Mr. Pauk lives in his native Toronto and freelances as a composer and conductor in addition to being the Music Director of The Esprit Orchestra.

THE ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

November 30, 1991, Jane Mallett Theatre
Alex Pauk - Music Director and Conductor



Violin I

Fujiko Imajishi (Concertmistress)
Marie Berard
Dominique Laplante
Jayne Maddison
Jennifer Saleebey
Anne Armstrong

Oboe

Lesley Young
Clarinet

Bassoon

Jerry Robinson

Violin II

Diane Tait
Ron Mah
Paul Zevenhuizen
Yakov Lerner
Janie Kim
Marianne Urke-Rapson

Horn

Gary Pattison

Trumpet

Viola

Stuart Laughton

Valerie Kuinka
Beverley Spotton
Rhyll Peel
Katharine Rapoport

Trombone

Robert Ferguson

Cello

Paul Widner
Elaine Thompson
Maurizio Baccante
Amanda Forsyth

Tuba

Scott Irvine

Bass

Roberto Occhipinti
Robert Speer

Celeste

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November 30, 1991, Jane Mallett Theatre

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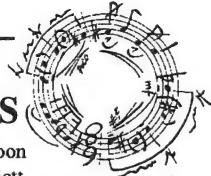
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